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**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Claims 1-20 (canceled)

Claim 21 (currently amended): An oral composition comprising:

- (a) a pharmaceutical active selected from the group consisting of antitussives, antihistamines, non-sedating antihistamines, decongestants, expectorants, analgesics, mucolytics, antipyretics, anti-inflammatory agents, local anesthetics, and mixtures thereof, wherein the pharmaceutical active has a molecular weight of less than 500 grams per mole;
- (b) a hydrophilic, water-miscible, anhydrous solvent ~~selected from the group consisting of propylene glycol, ethanol, poly(ethylene glycol) or PEG, propylene carbonate, diethylene glycol monoethyl ether, poloxamer, glycofurel, glycerol, and mixtures thereof~~, wherein the pharmaceutical active in its un-ionized form has a percent solubility value in the solvent at ambient temperature that is equal to or greater than 0.075% and the pharmaceutical active is in its free, un-ionized form as a monomolecular dispersion in the solvent; and
- (c) a reducing agent wherein the reducing agent has an  $E^0$  value equal to or greater than about -0.119V; and
- (d) from about 1% to about 10% by weight of added water.

Claim 22 (previously presented): The composition according to claim 21 wherein the reducing agent has an  $E^0$  value from about -0.119V to about +0.250V.

Claim 23 (previously presented): The composition according to claim 22 wherein the reducing agent is selected from the group consisting of metabisulfite salts, bisulfite salts, dithiothreitol, thiourea, sodium thiosulphate, thioglycolic acid, tert-butyl hydroquinone (TBHQ), acetyl cysteine, hydroquinone, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 24 (previously presented): The composition according to claim 23 wherein the reducing agent comprises from about 0.005% to about 1.000% by weight of the composition.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The composition according to claim 24 wherein the reducing agent comprises from about 0.1000% to about 0.01% by weight of the composition.

Claim 26 (previously amended): The composition according to claim 21 wherein the pharmaceutical active is capable of being ionized when the composition comprises an aqueous solvent, and in its un-ionized form has an octanol-water partition coefficient of at least 100.

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Claim 27 (canceled)

Claim 28 (previously amended): The composition according to claim 21 wherein the pharmaceutical active is in the solvent at a concentration of less than or equal to 125% of the percent solubility value of said active.

Claim 29 (previously presented): The composition according to claim 28 wherein the pharmaceutical active is present in the solvent at a level from about 0.075% to about 25.0% by weight of the composition.

Claim 30 (previously presented): The composition according to claim 29 wherein the pharmaceutical active is present in the solvent at a level from about 0.28% to about 10.0% by weight of the composition.

Claim 31 (previously presented): The composition according to claim 30 wherein the solvent comprises from about 60% to about 99.975% by weight of the composition.

Claim 32 (previously presented): The composition according to claim 31 wherein the solvent comprises from about 70% to about 99% by weight of the composition.

Claim 33 (previously presented): The composition according to claim 32 wherein the solvent comprises from about 85% to about 98% by weight of the composition.

Claim 34 (canceled)

Claim 35 (previously presented): A method for treating respiratory illnesses using the composition of claim 21 wherein the method comprises oral administration of said composition having a total dosage volume of no more than 3.0 mls.

Claim 36 (previously presented): The method according to claim 35 wherein the composition is placed against any mucosal membrane of the mouth.

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Claim 37 (new): Th composition according to claim 21 wherein the hydrophilic, water-miscible, anhydrous solvent is selected from the group consisting of propylene glycol, ethanol, poly(ethylene glycol) or PEG, propylene carbonate, diethylene glycol monoethyl ether, poloxamer, glycofurol, glycerol, and mixtures thereof.